

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 EB-11 OMB-01 AID-20 TRSE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 RSR-01 /141 W

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R 221330 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5325

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

COMIDEASTFOR

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0681

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIN, PFOR, MARR, MA, FR

SUBJ: FRANCO- MALAGASY NEGOTIATIONS

REF: TANANARIVE 0670

BEGIN SUMMARY: FRENCH AMB CONFIRMS AGREEMENT EVACUATE FRENCH AIR
BASE AT IVATO AND REMOVE HEADQUARTERS SOUTH INDIAN OCEAN FRENCH
FORCES TO REUNION. INDICATES FRENCH NAVAL BASE AT DIEGO-
SUAREZ TO REMAIN, BUT PERIOD OF TIME NOT SPECIFIED. STATES MONETARY
AREA COMPLETELY REOPENED FOR NEGOTIATION. END SUMMARY.

1. FRENCH AMBASSADOR DELAUNEY ASKED ME CALL MAY 22 TO GIVE
ME RUNDOWN ON STATE OF FRENCH- MALAGASY NEGOTIATIONS.

2. HE STATED AGREEMENTS REACHED WITHOUT PROBLEM IN CULTURAL
AND JUDICIAL AREAS, AND WITHOUT MAJOR PROBLEM WITH RESPECT
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. MATTERS IN OTHER TECHNICAL AREAS ALSO
SETTLED WITHOUT DIFFICULTY.

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3. IN MILITARY AREA, HE NOTED FRENCH HAVE ACCEPTED EVACUATION OF AIR BASE AT IVATO, AS WAS EXPECTED. HEADQUARTERS FRENCH FORCES SOUTH INDIAN OCEAN AREA TO BE SHIFTED FROM TANANARIVE TO REUNION. ARSENAL AT DIEGO- SUAREZ TO BE PLACED UNDER JOINT FRENCH- MALAGASY CONTROL, WITH MALAGASY MANAGER AND FRENCH TECHNICAL MANAGER.

4. NAVAL BASE AT DIEGO- SUAREZ WILL REMAIN, BUT FOR PERIOD WHICH HE SAID HAS NOT BEEN SPECIFIED. COMMENT: I BELIEVE HE MEANT THAT SOME GENERAL FORMULA HAS BEEN ARRIVED AT IN AGREEMENT WHICH LEAVES DOOR OPEN ON MALAGASY SIDE TO DEMAND EVAUCATION SHOULD MALAGASY SO DESIRE, BUT COULD LEAVE FRENCH BASE IN PLACE INDEFINITELY SHOULD NEITHER MALAGASY NOR FRENCH WISH TO CLOSE IT. THIS WOULD SEEM SATISFY POLITICAL REQUIREMENT OF GOMR AT SAME TIME IT PROVIDES FRENCH WITH POSSIBILITY OF RETAINING BASE.

5. IN MONETARY FIELD, DELAUNEY STATED (WITH AIR OF SOME RESIGNATION) THAT EVERYTHING HAD BEEN OPENED UP AGAIN FOR NEGOTIATION. HE NOTED THAT EARLIER AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED IN THIS AREA BETWEEN MALAGASY MINISTER ECONOMY AND FINANCE RAMAROSON AND FRENCH MINISTER FINANCE GISCARD D' ESTAING, BUT THAT THIS AGREEMENT SUBSEQUENTLY BECAME UNHINGED BECAUSE " SOMEONE" IN GOMR UNWILLING ACCEPT WHAT RAMAROSON HAD AGREED TO.

6. COMMENTS: FROM OTHER SOURCES, IT IS EVEIDENT FRENCH CONSIDER FONMIN RATSIRAKA AS OFFICIAL WHO CALLED INTO QUESTION EARLIER MONETARY AGREEMENT. I WAS RATHER SURPRISED BY DELAUNEY' S STATEMENT THAT ENTIRE MONETARY AREA REOPENED FOR NEGOTIATION, AS PRESS STORIES HAVE BEEN INDICATING THAT MAIN PROBLEM REMAINING FOR SETTLEMENT IS WHETHER CURRENT MALAGASY SYSTEM OF TIGHT FOREIGN EXCHANGE CONTROLS WILL BE RELAXED TO PERMIT TRANSFERS (APPARENTLY OF PROFITS AND FOR REPATRIATION OF CAPITAL) IN EXCHANGE FOR FRENCH " GUARANTEE" OF CONVERT- IBLITY OF MALAGASY FRANC.

7. SINCE BOTH FRENCH AND MALAGASY GOVERNMENTS HAVE TAKEN POSITION THAT NEGOTIATIONS ARE OF GLOBAL CHARACTER, PRESUMABLY NO AGREEMENTS WILL BE FINALLY SIGNED UNLESS AGREEMENT IS REACHED IN MONETARY AREA. FRENCH TECHNICAL EXPERT IN LATTER CONFIDENTIAL

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AREA ARRIVED TANANARIVE MAY 21 AND RESUMED TALKS. DELAUNEY STILL HOPEFUL ABOUT UNTIMATE AGREEMENT AS HE FEELS MALAGASY ALTERNATIVES, SUCH AS TIGHT IMPORT CONTROLS AND/ OR DEVALUATION, WILL OBLIGE THEM REMAIN IN FRANC ZONE. MENDENHALL

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